

REMARKS

The drawings have been objected to. Figure 1 has been replaced and amended in accordance with the draftspersons remarks.

Claims 1-3, 5 and 7 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by Sawada. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention relates to a central management apparatus which determines when a device management unit(s) has not sent data after an allotted time frame has elapsed. In this regard, however, the state [reception/no reception] is not determined immediately after the allotted time has elapsed, but rather the state [no reception] is determined when data transmission has not occurred after a certain allowed time has elapsed after the allotted time. This "allowed time" varies depending on the type of connection, device, etc.

Sawada, as cited by the Examiner, discloses a central control system that monitors and remotely controls one or more terminal devices. In this context, Sawada discloses a fixed data transmission time for the terminal device that is supervised by controlling means. A display displays identification information of a communication device provided for the terminal device in the case where the controlling means has not received the information despite the fact that the fixed transmission time has already passed the present time (col. 16, lns. 28-35). However, Sawada fails to disclose making a determination regarding the reception/non-reception of a communication after an allotted time which is after the fixed transmission time. That is, in the present invention, the determination of non-reception is made after two time periods- first, a fixed transmission time and second, an allotted time after reception of the communication tagged onto the fixed transmission time.

Hence, claim 1 is believed patentable. Claims 2-3, 5 and 7, depending from claim either directly or indirectly, are similarly patentable.

Claims 8-10, 12, 14, 15-16 and 18 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Sawada. The rejection is respectfully traversed for the same reasons presented in the arguments above, and for the following reasons.

The Examiner makes conclusory statements of obviousness for his/her reasons to modify the reference. Applicants' respectfully request that the Examiner cite a reference of record in support of his/her reasons for modifying the reference. That is, the Examiner may not make conclusory statements of obviousness without evidentiary support on the record.

Claims 4, 6, 11, 13 and 17 have been rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Claims 4, 6, 11 and 17 have been amended for improved clarity. However, it is unclear why the Examiner rejects claim 13 for being confusing. Applicants' respectfully request that the Examiner rephrase the rejection or withdraw it from the record.

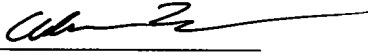
In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 325772018800.

However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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